

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2017*

**Remarks at the Ford's Theatre Gala**

*June 4, 2017*

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Melania and I are very grateful to be here this evening to enjoy this really incredible program with all of the distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends.

*Terrorist Attack in London, United Kingdom*

Before continuing, I'd like to take a moment to address the horrific terrorist attack on the people of London. I've spoken with Prime Minister May and expressed our unwavering support for our allies and the United Kingdom and pledged that the United States will do everything in our power to assist the United Kingdom and its citizens as they work to protect their country and to bring those that are guilty to justice.

America sends our thoughts, our prayers, and our deepest sympathies to the victims of this evil slaughter, and we renew our resolve—stronger than ever before—to protect the United States and its allies from a vile enemy that has waged war on innocent life. And it's gone on too long. This bloodshed must end. This bloodshed will end.

As President, I will do what is necessary to prevent this threat from spreading to our shores and work every single day to protect the safety and security of our country, our communities, and our people. Thank you. *[Applause]* Thank you.

*Ford's Theatre Gala*

I'm glad to be joined tonight by so many Senators, Members of Congress, members of the Cabinet, our great Vice President Mike Pence and Karen—thank you for being here; special people—helping to continue this long tradition of preserving one of America's most important theaters and honoring one of its greatest Presidents and recognizing some of its most accomplished citizens.

I want to congratulate Ford's Theatre and all of the performers and staff. That was terrific, terrific entertainment. I wish we could go on a little bit longer with it, to be honest to with you. *[Laughter]* I was a little disappointed when I had to get up and speak to soon. *[Laughter]* But it was a beautiful program, and I appreciate it.

And Larry Gatlin's been my friend for a long time. Maybe not as long as I've known Ronald, but still a long time. *[Laughter]* I've known Ronald—you had to say 40 years, didn't you, Ronald? *[Laughter]* Couldn't you have said 20 or 22? *[Laughter]* Forty years, Ronald. That's probably right.

And the Gatlin Brothers, though, they've been supporters and friends. And, Larry, from the day I met him, he was looking for a nice apartment in New York, and I said, "Oh, that's great." And he actually bought one in one of my buildings. *[Laughter]* And he did very well with it, actually. *[Laughter]* But they've been friends for a long time.

And the performance, I have to say—to Paul Tetreault and Jennifer Thomas, for all of the work that they do, and you put it to this event, you worked so hard. My people are telling me how hard it is and how hard you did, and I want to thank you very much. Fantastic job.

Fantastic. A lot of energy. I actually commented, I said, that man's got great energy, is that right? *[Laughter]*

But not only does this theater contribute to the vibrant culture of our Nation's Capital, but it also does tremendous work in educating Americans about a leader who preserved our Nation in its single greatest hour of danger and who forged a new birth of freedom from our very bloody Civil War, and that's the great Abraham Lincoln.

Thanks in part to your work tonight, Lincoln's presence is not just here, it lives with us down through the ages. He suffered so much—his life was hard—and is remembered for his leadership, inspiration, and his enduring vision of a government of, for, and by the people.

Thanks to every single one of you who has come out tonight to support Ford's Theatre and the great work it does to keep Abraham Lincoln's memory alive. And it is a special pleasure to see my friends, Ron Perelman and Peyton Manning, both recognized for their incredible generosity and citizenship and leadership.

Ron has been an amazingly charitable person in so many ways. I've known him to give so much of himself and his family for so long. And that includes helping art and culture and making it accessible to countless Americans. So, Ronald, thank you. And I love you too, by the way. You said you loved me, and I love you too. And your parents, they'd be very proud of you, Ronald. Special people, right? Special people.

And Peyton is a true champion, both on and off the field. Yes, look at that Peyton. *[Laughter]* He's a good guy to have as my golf partner. He's done so much good for so many young people and children. You got to see a little bit of it tonight. On behalf of the American people, Peyton, our thanks are to you and to Ronald and to Mrs. Manning, thank you very much. Very much appreciate it. And this is a great way of honoring two really extraordinary people. Thank you both very much.

And of course, we're also incredibly inspired to hear the amazing work that Kevin Tuerff and Jay Winuk have done with Pay It Forward 9/11 and 9/11day.org. From one of the darkest days in American history, we were there. These citizens have carried forward a spirit of service, charity, and love of our country.

Abraham Lincoln, to whom all Americans owe such a debt, would have taken great pleasure in the unity he would have witnessed tonight, in kindness and patriotism that is vivid and so beautifully on display right here this evening.

As I sat in the audience and I looked up, I said, wow, that's something. That—I've been hearing about it, I've been reading about it all of my life. And I said to Melania, look at that. It means so much to the people in this room when we see that. Incredible that you've been able to do such a great job to make it available to so many. Congratulations to everybody, and to everybody in the room, all of these incredible sponsors.

And by the way, that was the A-list—right, Ronald? That's the A-list of sponsors. You don't do any better than that, do you? *[Laughter]*

But Abraham Lincoln would have loved that, more than the 150 years after this theater first opened. I mean, when you look at it, it's a place where Americans of all backgrounds, from all parts, all over the world, from both parties—can you believe that? From both parties. *[Laughter]* This may be one of the few times we unite. But we'll get there, you watch—can get come together and enjoy the arts in unity and in peace.

So, once again, thank you to Ford's Theatre, to its really, really talented performers, and to its many wonderful, successful, incredible supporters. May God bless you, may God bless this wonderful, wonderful place, and may God bless the United States of America. Thank you all very much. Congratulations. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:36 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Karen Pence, wife of Vice President Michael R. Pence; musicians Larry Gatlin and Jennifer Thomas; Paul R. Tetreault, director, Ford's Theatre; Ronald O. Perelman, chairman and chief executive officer, MacAndrews & Forbes Inc.; Peyton W. Manning, former quarterback, National Football League's Denver Broncos, and his wife Ashley; Raymond G. Perelman, chairman and president, of RGP Holdings, Inc.; Kevin Tuerff, chief executive officer, Kevin Tuerff Consulting, LLC, founder and manager of the website [payitforward911.org](http://payitforward911.org); and Jay Winuk, cofounder and executive vice president, 9/11 Day Observance and MyGoodDeed, a nonprofit organization that annually organizes the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance. The transcript, prepared for immediate release by the Office of the Press Secretary, was received by the Office of the Federal Register on July 27.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Ford's Theatre gala.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Gatlin, Larry; Manning, Ashley; Manning, Peyton W.; May, Theresa; Pence, Karen; Pence, Michael R.; Perelman, Raymond G.; Perelman, Ronald O.; Tetreault, Paul R.; Thomas, Jennifer; Trump, Melania; Tuerff, Kevin; Winuk, Jay.

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